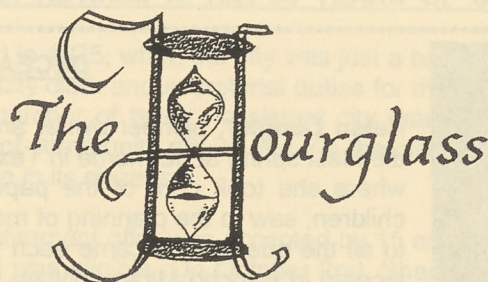


Historical Society of Palm Desert

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Community

Service

Collections

Archives

WINTER 2009

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THINGS TO SEE

At the Society's Historic Fire House

Stop by for a visit at the Society's headquarters during December. Also, if you are having house guests over the holiday, it's a great place to bring them for some quality time. We have things to interest and educate you about by-gone years, as well as exhibits to delight the eyes. If you haven't seen Carolyn Green's chamber pot display yet, do it now while it is still on loan to us. Also, we have a few of Carl Bray's paintings on display, which are available for purchase. Not only can you have the opportunity to own a piece of art from one of the most renowned desert artists, but you can delight in his brilliant work daily on the walls of your own home.

You can browse our version of a gift shop in the main exhibit room. We have lots of books, and the main one is the "Images of America – Palm Desert" printed by Arcadia Publishing. This masterpiece with lots of historic photos will take you back in time to see how Palm Desert became a famous resort and cultural heart of the Coachella Valley. Our city with over 30 golf courses started as a barren outpost called Sand Hole. Founder Cliff Henderson envisioned a modern utopia in the desert. As a centerpiece for the post-war community he built the Shadow Mountain Club with its figure-eight swimming pool and high-dive competitions. The club drew celebrities, presidents, and future residents. His brother Randall published "Desert Magazine" here, encouraging wilderness lovers to join in the fun. You can experience the whole story in this wonderful book.

Other things for sale that might interest you as gifts are a variety of books, cards, historic photos, and a few holiday items. Bargain hunters might find yard sale items still on display in the yard. Even if you leave your wallet at home, we would love to see you just to pass the time of day and say, "Merry Christmas!"

WATERCOLOR PAINTING SHOW

December 1 through 13

Thanks to the efforts of hard-working member Hal Rover, the Coachella Valley Watercolor Society has decided to display their work at the historic fire house on El Paseo. The collection of paintings is the group's "Small Images Show" which is made available to the public on an annual basis. Regular gallery hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily during the exhibit.

THANKS A MILLION

President Barbara Keedy Eastes and the Board of Directors extend a big "Thank You" to all the people who worked during the summer when the museum was closed to the public. Also to everyone who worked setting up, greeting customers on the week-end of the yard sale, and packing things up at the end. Mini-Muster workers deserve our appreciation for the hours and efforts they expended.

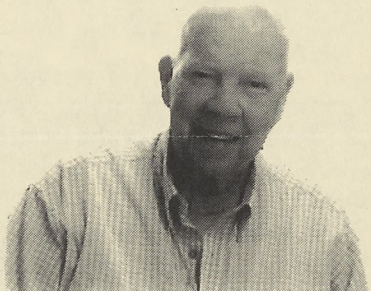
The Society survives because of the volunteers who come forward when there are needs to be met. Yes, we all have had the experience of getting more out of our community service than we give. Please know that we couldn't do it without you!!



DECEASED MEMBERS

Helen Dengler, pioneer owner and manager of the White Sun Guest Ranch, died last spring at her home in Texas. Helen was a very busy lady at the ranch, where she took care of the paperwork, put on shows with the help of her children, saw to the planning of meals in the kitchen, and paid special attention to all the guests who came each year for their vacations on the property now located in Rancho Mirage. When her duties at the ranch no longer demanded so much of her time, she jumped into community projects. Recycling was one of her bigger interests, and she assisted Marian Henderson and Desert Beautiful.

Daniel Martin Callahan was born on July 1, 1926 to William and Nel Callahan in Long Beach, CA. He died on October 24, 2009 in his sleep of heart failure, after a prolonged recovery from bypass surgery at the age of 83. Danny moved to Coachella Valley in 1939, where he and his Uncle Hank Gogerty built the family's first home on their 320-acre ranch (now Eisenhower Medical Center and Rancho Mirage Country Club.) In 1944 he entered the Army and served in the Philippines and in Japan. He served for two years and was awarded the Bronze Star for heroism and meritorious service. Then he enrolled at U.C.-Davis and majored in horticulture and business.



Danny returned to the desert ranch in 1950 and grew grapes, dates, and citrus. Simultaneously, he and his Uncle Hank opened the 400-acre Desert Air Hotel and Palm Desert Air Park (now Rancho Las Palmas Resort and Country Club and Vons shopping center.) The complex consisted of two 3600-foot lighted turf runways, a polo field, cottages, swimming pools, and a bar and dining room. Dan managed the airport and represented the family in development of the property until it was sold in 1968.

Dan Callahan married Barbara Jean, a teacher, in 1950 and for 20 years they were part of the social whirl here in the valley. They raised three children -- Daniel Jr., Kyle, and Timothy -- and lived in their Indian Wells home for over 43 years. After nearly 55 years of wedded bliss, BJ lost a battle with cancer in 2005.

Very much of a people-person, Dan led an active life and made many friends here in the valley. Besides working with HMS Real Estate, selling Palm Desert, ranch and acreage property; other projects included the Desert Turf Club (a quarter-horse race track) with Frank Bogert and the JayCee's first hole-in-one tournament in Indian Wells. He and Phil Harris were close friends, and he liked to tell of talking with General Eisenhower in the grocery store while Mamie was shopping. He was definitely a pioneers and history-maker here for many years.

There is an endless list of awards to his credit. The Society is especially indebted to Dan and BJ for coordinating Mini-Muster for over 10 years; they also were the Founder's Day awardees in 2003. Donations to the Society in Dan Callahan's memory will be deeply appreciated.

BIRD (OR) BYRD ?

In the last issue of Hourglass the editor made an error. The article on the Society Potluck spelled Millie Bird with a "y". This resulted in people calling her to find out if her husband is a descendent of Admiral Richard Byrd who was involved in Arctic exploration from 1925 through 1956. Being an amateur genealogist I am very aware of how the spelling of a sir name can get changed even from one generation to the next. Who knows what famous ancestry lurks in our family histories. Did you know that one of our Society members, who we all know and love, is a seventh cousin of Elvis Presley? Please accept my apology for the error, Millie.

POTLUCK CHAIRPERSONS

The two ladies who did an excellent job of organizing the first Society Potluck are to be congratulated. They are Kim Housken and Madonna Marman. It was such an enjoyable function that it surely will be repeated in the future.

SHEILA GILLIGAN RETIRES AFTER 34 YEARS OF SERVICE

She was hired by the City of Palm Desert in 1975, when the city was just a baby -- having been incorporated for only two years. Her job included deputy city clerk and secretarial duties for the city manager. Over her 34 years tenure she took on an unprecedented number of tasks: assistant city manager for community services, city clerk, public information officer, director of community affairs, etc. As the city grew, she left her finger prints on many projects which generated civic pride in its citizens.

The city's recent, budget-cutting, early retirement offer was accepted by 15 employees, who received two years' service credit on their pensions. Gilligan was eligible. On October 2nd, Sheila was given a retirement party at Desert Willow Country Club at which her numerous friends had the opportunity to wish her well. Councilman Dick Kelly listed her services to the City of Palm Desert. "She did every job exceptionally well," he exclaimed. Michael Landes of EMC said Sheila had a great influence on him after he sold his business. She explained the political process, and motivated him without an agenda. Steve Thedford of the Sheriffs' Department said she welcomed him when he took over as Lieutenant, and he almost gave her a ticket for speeding on San Pablo. She always gave straight information. Frank Ourlette of Burrtec said she had a heart of gold. Sheila taught him how to dress for a costume party (a photo was circulated which garnered lots of laughs and a few shocked expressions.) After thanking Sheila for her many instances of practical advice, Mayor Bob Spiegel read the City Proclamation about her many accomplishments. In her words of thanks, Sheila said she and Jerry moved to the desert originally to do house construction in November of 1972 shortly after their marriage. In 1975 Gilligan took the position offered her at city hall on Prickly Pear Lane.



In those early years there were only 4,400 people in Palm Desert. Highway 111 had two signals, and a four-way stop at Hwy. 74 and 111. Shopping for clothing was non-existent, with only a few stores on El Paseo, and they put tinfoil in the windows and closed for the summer. To get groceries you had three choices: Market Basket, Village Market, and Sunshine Meat, Fish and Liquor. The Iron Gate on Hwy. 74 was one of the first restaurants in town.

Variances in popular opinion of Palm Desert's citizenry caused bouts of controversy that made headlines in the local newspapers. Don't block my view of the mountains, street lighting would ruin the starry skies at night, curbs and gutters was a nasty idea, the signing in the shopping areas was unsightly, landmark palms had to be replanted, a fire department and flood control were needed, was a K-Mart desirable for the area, a shopping mall would eliminate small businesses, and on-and-on the battles continued.

On April 19, 2006 Sheila Gilligan was invited to be the featured speaker at a Historical Society luncheon. After giving a marvelous run-down on local history, she had this to say. "Though I was born and raised back east, I grew up right here in Palm Desert. Our family became part of a community, and I found a job I loved."

"RIM OF THE WORLD" HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This summer the Folkers family visited a museum which has been setting up in a new location since April. Chuck and Michelle, three daughters, and grandparents rode the family car through twisting mountain roads until we finally came upon the building in Lake Arrowhead. They had advertised an exhibit in remembrance of Santa's Village, an array of small colorful houses that was a popular attraction in the 1950s. Sure enough, there were photos, scrap books, and Santa Clause amid reds and greens and candy cane stripes. Friendly board members gave us the grand tour. They were particularly proud of the little theater which is still in the construction process, and they have a whole array of historic movies they plan to show to the public. This society covers the whole San Bernardino Mountains area of which Highway 18 is the "rim."

FALL LUNCHEON

October 28, 2009

This annual affair was held at Cuistot restaurant. That's the beautiful building next to the new Visitor's Center at the west end of El Paseo and Highway 111. The menu choices were chicken, sea bass, or farfalle pasta; and the French dessert was raspberry feuilleté. The interior décor is exceeded only by the exterior architecture. Those in attendance included some new and interesting persons.

DONATIONS

Toby Regorrah Estate	13 items for the paper archive to initiate: PD - Pioneers - Regorrah, Toby	Collection #160
City of Palm Desert	45 videos on C.O.D.; 35 items for the paper archive; 14 HSPD label pins; 12 Art Publications 12-93; 1 file, Palm Desert Historical Committee	Collection #22
Nancy Culp	22 pieces to initiate: PD - Pioneers - Gibbs, Charles & June; 6 items for the paper archive; numerous photos	Collection #161
Chamber of Commerce	14 items for paper archive	Collection #10
Bonnie Bowie	57 items for the paper archive from the estate of Rheo Lawman; Documents & photos for the entire collection number 538.	Collection #23

CURATOR'S REPORT

This summer we found a scrap book of Cliff Henderson's dated '46 and '47 which was a treasure-trove of local history. It surfaced late in our sorting activities of Henderson estate materials, and it yielded 90 pieces for the Collection #154 part of the CWH Collection.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

- Mini-Muster report = John Marman said that this years program was the best one to date. Tee-shirts from Mini-Muster will be sold for \$15 each.
 - Jan Holmlund suggested publishing a cookbook to defray Mini-Muster expenses. Marman reported that all expenses were covered by Rotary, Indian Wells, and budgeted City of Palm Desert money.
 - Marman said that Rotary lost money on their cookbook. MOTION not to pursue the cook book now.
 - Five children who won the art contest will ride on the fire truck in the Golf Cart Parade.
- New Board Members: **Louise Neeley** and **Adele Sandman**.
- "Coffee & Conversaton" lecture was so successful that terminating the Society's partnership with Desert Institute and their lecture series in 2010 was discussed. Hal Rover will contact them about the matter.
 - HSPD lecture included: "Do You Remember?" Question & Answer period was very fruitful.
 - Suggestions for future HSPD lectures: on Saturdays with light lunch, COD on pottery, Del Safari C.C., History Hunters, list to DSUSD, publicity.
- Fall Luncheon at Cuistot - not able to use our sound system, thanked for raffle prizes. Discussed the question: "Why do you have to hold the luncheons on a weekday?" That excludes people who work.
- Barbara Eastes was a guest speaker at the Western Conference in San Diego.
- Workers Compensation insurance for volunteers being investigated.

FALL YARD SALE

November 14 & 15, 2009

This year's fund raiser netted approximately \$3,660 for the Society coffers. Probably with the present state of the economy, that was a fairly good profit. A host of loyal society members turned out during the week prior to the sale and also during the weekend it was held. Here is an alphabetical list of those who deserve a great big "thank you": Bonnie & Jack Bowie, Mary Brennecke, Barbara Eastes, Dick & Ginny Folkers, Don & Bed Graybill, Marcy Gregory, Kim Housken, John & Madonna Marman, Kermit Martin & Anne, Gary Olesen, Harry Quinn, Brett & Rose Romer, Hal and Angie Rover, Adele Sandman, and Eric Vogt. Left-over items were boxed up after the sale; Kim Housken will put info on Craig's list and provide provenance for boutique items.

Considering the ratio of hours worked compared with the dollars collected, the sale cannot be considered a huge success. However, for the amount of time shared in conversation and the talents used in various sections of materials displayed, this function is a No. 1 social success. The two days of the actual sale are fun for both the workers and for the customers, and in many cases the workers and customers are the same people. It is a good place to find unique Christmas gifts for both adults and children. The Society needs more enjoyable "Let's get together" activities. What do you think? We welcome your ideas.

Getting Into Christmas Spirit Easier Here?**Taken from an article by Chuck Shelton****Palm Desert Post, 12-16-75**

Though our socio-ethnic differences with Bethlehem are great, our geographic similarity is close. Our desert valley and the Valley of Galilee are geological twins. The Salton Sink and the sink of the Dead Sea are both below sea level in the earth's crust. Both are agricultural wonders today, thanks to irrigation. In Christ's days on earth there were date palms in the Holy Land, just as there are in our valley today.

The years may dull the spirit, but nowhere else can we feel so akin to Jerusalem in a physical sense. Our valley is within one degree of the latitude of the Negev Desert. Our hills are the same rock as that of the Wadi of Seba aside Beersheeba. Our stars in the evening sky are the same stars that shown over Bethlehem 2000 years ago.

THESE CONSTANT STARS

*In the desert of old Judea
Where the wind is never still,
Sand heaps its shimmering patterns
Into mountain range and hill.*

*Drifting and ever drifting,
These centuries of sand,
Shifting and ever shifting,
A transient phantom land.*

*Great peaks that gleam in the moonlight
Are gone in the morning sun.
Hills that loom in the moonlight
Lie level when day is done.*

*Yet the stars that hung o'er Bethlehem
Still give their silver light,
Unchanged since the holiest Christmas
... these stars above tonight.*

— poem by Maude Rubin from an issue of Desert Magazine

Note: Chuck Shelton was one of our most prominent pioneers and he was an excellent writer. He bought Desert Magazine from Randall Henderson and published it for years. Later on he took over the Palm Desert Post newspaper, which did an excellent job of covering local history.

CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE

Rose Romer has volunteered to set up a Christmas booth in the museum as she did last year. With all of the best items left from the Christmas display at the yard sale, she will be selling holiday items for your convenience and pleasure. Should you find that you need last-minute gifts or decorations, stop by the fire house and see what Rose has to offer.

NATIVE AMERICANS = CAHUILLA INDIANS

"Hundreds upon hundreds of years ago, water in ancient Lake Cahuilla lapped at the sides of the rocky surroundings now described as the Coachella Valley. This was a rich homeland of the ancient Cahuilla people. Fish traps were tools of a bountiful trade, and evidence of those traps still are buried in the land." The beginning of this article from the Desert Sun dated 11-1-09 by Debra Gruszecki caught my eye as I scanned the newspapers for archival materials. It covered a two-day conference held at University of California called "Desertlands /Sacred Lands."

The conference was held to heighten awareness of the value of ceremonial areas, former villages, cemeteries, rock art, and sites mentioned in ancient stories and songs. Trafzer, one of the speakers, said, "Before destroying the site or compromising its integrity, consider viewing the land through another lens." It is difficult for us to see the ancient world of this area in the highly developed areas, but a view of barren desert could most certainly accommodate the life of the Cahuillas. It is an interesting subject which we will try to give more coverage in this newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

Supporting: Bonnie S. Paul
Dorian Paulson

Family: Vaughn & Jean Denning
Robert & Diane Jones
Bruce & Nancy Samson

Individual: Ellen Lloyd Trover
Richard Wood

**MEMBERSHIP in the Society
Would be a Great Christmas Gift !**

Individual	\$25	Contributing	\$100	Bronze	\$1000
Family	\$30	Patron	\$250	Silver	\$2500
Supporting	\$50	Business	\$75	Gold	\$5000

SCHEDULE OF UP-COMING EVENTS

Dec. 1 thru 13	Water Color Art Exhibit	Fire House	10-3 daily
Dec. 16, Wed.	Board Meeting	Fire House	9:30 a.m.
Christmas & New Year	Museum closed		
Jan. 22, Friday	Lecture: Rock Art by Harry Quinn, \$5	Portola Com. Cnt.	7 p.m.
Feb. 26, Friday	Lecture: Wild Flowers by Doug Walker, \$5	Portola Com. Cnt.	7 p.m.
Mar. 26, Friday	Lecture: History of Water by Bob Keeran, \$5	Portola Com. Cnt.	7 p.m.
Mar. 28, Sunday	Ed Mullins "Picnic in the Park"	Pavilion in Park	11:30 am
April	Spring Luncheon (to be announced)		
April 23, Friday	Lecture (to be announced)	Portola Com. Cnt.	7 p.m.
May 15, Saturday	Founder's Day	Council Chamber	2-4 p.m.

Happy Holidays !

Ginny Folkers, Editor / Curator

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